



MANHASSET PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Gaurav Passi, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

March 17, 2023

Dear Manhasset School Community,

Last night at our Board of Education meeting, I addressed several videos circulating on social media that have caused concern about staff hiring practices and curriculum development in school districts across Long Island. You can watch the meeting on the District's [YouTube channel](#). My comments regarding these videos begin at 15:08.

The videos are concerning because they suggest that Districts on Long Island conspire in their hiring practices to root out candidates based on their political beliefs and that Districts are covertly pushing a particular agenda into both hiring practices and curriculum.

If this were true about Manhasset, it would certainly be cause for concern. Let me assure you, it is not. Manhasset's multi-layered approach provides checks and balances throughout our hiring and curriculum development processes.

Please allow me to emphasize the following with respect to our hiring practices:

- The District's hiring practices are grounded in a firm commitment to finding the absolute best educators for our students from a deep pool of candidates.
- The District uses a de-centralized model where departmental administrators, typically in pairs, initiate the process by reviewing and screening resumes. The responsible administrator then forms a committee of volunteer teachers, administrators, and often parents to interview candidates for teaching and administrative vacancies.
- The District does not utilize a rubric for the interview committee. Nor do we ask questions to assess, in particular, a candidate's political leanings or religious background. Because our District does not discriminate in our hiring process, committee members are instructed not to ask questions about a long list of items such as religion, marital status, organization memberships, etc.

With respect to our curriculum:

- Our parents are our partners. Our curriculum rests on our instructional programs selected through a rigorous research, and committee-based process and is ultimately presented to the Board of Education in public meetings.

- Our instructional programs are reviewed and discussed annually at public Board of Education meetings.
- From time to time, a parent may raise a concern about instructional material or a topic that is being discussed in a particular classroom. Most conversations that have taken place around instructional material or a topic discussed are resolved at the classroom level. Sometimes these discussions are elevated to our administrators. There are certainly instances in which these discussions have resulted in changes to our materials and practices.

Let me stress once again that we welcome parental input. The District's commitment has been and always will be on partnering with parents to cultivate a safe learning environment where students become independent thinkers who employ critical reasoning skills, work collaboratively, respect each other's individuality, and embody integrity, honesty, empathy, and compassion. Let me assure you that we remain committed to our partnership and focused on our students.

Sincerely,



Dr. Gaurav Passi
Superintendent of Schools